("sal-i-gen-in" for sal-ij'en-in), *stearic* ("stēr-ik" instead of ste-ar'ik), and *xenon* ("zē'non" for zen'on).

Medical terms, however, seem to be the most frequently mispronounced of all scientific words. Very few physicians, for example, pronounce *gynecology* "jin-e-kol'o-je," but say "guy-ne-kol'o-je." The former is regarded as orthoëpic by Drs. W. A. N. Dorland, E. C. L. Miller and G. M. Gould, the recognized authorities on medical lexicography, as well as by the leading lay phonologists. *Enteroclysis* is another ordinary medical word that is often mispronounced as "en-ter-o-klī'sis," instead of en-ter-ok'lis-is. Another term of entirely different meaning, *enterocleisis,* is pronounced correctly in the former way.

There are in scientific use quite a few homophones, or words having the same sound as others, but differing in meaning and generally in derivation and often in spelling. *Sitology* and *cytology* are illustrations, both being pronounced "sī-tol'o-je." If the former were in wider usage, it would be better to pronounce it "sit-ol'o-je." *Psychosis* and *sycosis* are two other examples of casual homonyms. Then we have *tic* and *tick; cerasin, ceresin* and *sericin; cerin* and *serin; cetaceous* and *setaceous;* and other groups of words agreeing in sound but differing in meaning from one another.

Much more insistence should be accorded in education to standards of diction and composition—an insistence that students of all classes pronounce and use words carefully and properly. In England the manner of a person's speech is largely influential in determining not only his social standing but also his earning capacity—the natural condition in a country where competition is more rigorous than we in America can yet conceive, but to which we shall certainly come.

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## "ISORROPIC"

REFERRING to the note by Professor Alfred C. Lane on "Isontic," p. 37 of SCIENCE for July 13, 1928, I would call attention to the word "Isorropic" given in Webster's dictionary, from which it would appear that it is compounded of the Greek works for equal and momentum. As a whole we are told it is intended to mean: "in equipoise; of equal value." An *isorropic line* in a diagram is "the locus of all points for which a specific function has a constant value."

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## PRICKLY PEAR CONTROL IN AUSTRALIA

IN speaking of Dr. R. J. Tillyard's paper on the "Biological Control of Noxious Weeds" in the account of the Congress of Entomology in SCIENCE for September 14, the writer attributed the work done in Australia on the control of the prickly pear to Dr. Tillyard. Coming in late to listen to the paper I missed the opening remarks and the explanation by Dr. Tillyard that the work was done by the Prickly Pear Board in Queensland and New South Wales under the direction of Professor Harvey Johnston, Mr. J. C. Hamlin, Mr. W. B. Alexander and, finally, by Mr. Alan P. Dodd, to all of whom Dr. Tillyard gives most glowing tribute for the excellence of their work. The acknowledgments to these men are fully set forth by Dr. Tillyard in his paper which will appear later in the Proceedings of the Congress.

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# QUOTATIONS

## THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND HARVARD UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT CAMPBELL, of the University of California, has recently published in SCIENCE a survey of the geographical and institutional distribution of the membership of the National Academy of Sciences. The significance of the survey lies in the recognized standing of the National Academy as indicating the relative eminence of American men of science in the judgment of their colleagues. It is the equivalent in America of the British Royal Society. It was incorporated in 1863, during the presidency of Lincoln, with Agassiz, Joseph Henry and others among its charter members. Its membership includes scholars in mathematics and astronomy, physics and engineering, chemistry, geology and paleontology, biology and anthropology. Originally established as a means of relating scientific research to public needs, it rendered a notable service during the Great War, and was responsible for the organization of the National Research Council, through which this service has been organized and perpetuated.

As regards geographical distribution, President Campbell's survey brings out the fact of sectional segregation. Sixty-six per cent. of the academy's members live in the New England and Middle Atlantic States (including Washington, D. C.), seventeen per cent. in the Middle West and fifteen per cent. in California, leaving the South and West (excepting California) almost unrepresented. Among institutions, Harvard has thirty-five members, and is followed, in turn, by Chicago and Yale with sixteen each,